

Children's homes inspection – Full

Inspection date	21 June 2016
Unique reference number	SC020602
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	New Horizons (Child Care) Limited
Registered provider address	Hurstwood Court, New Hall Hey Road, Rawtenstall, Rawtenstall, Lancashire BB4 6HR

Responsible individual	Christine Bird
Registered manager	Post Vacant
Inspector	Hannah Bates

Inspection date	21 June 2016
Previous inspection judgement	Improved effectiveness
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.	
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Requires improvement

SC020602

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- Staff focus on mediation to resolve young people's concerns. This has been effective and promoted positive relationships within the home.
- Young people are safe, and their risk-taking behaviours decrease. Staff help young people to understand more about their behaviours through child-focused direct work.
- Some young people excel in their education. Staff support and promote young people's attendance at school and their achievements.
- Staff promote young people's inclusion in school. Young people have friends. They go on school trips to places such as London and are planning to go to New York.
- Young people are actively involved in their plans in the home. Staff have developed innovative ways of involving young people in their behaviour management plans.
- Staff ensure that young people have positive experiences. They take young people on mini-break holidays and days out to Blackpool and Alton Towers.
- Staff are wholly committed to the young people in their care. They have supported young people with recent staff changes and transitions from the home. Young people have had appropriate endings with staff members when they have left.
- Partnership working with placing authorities is good. They communicate well with social workers.
- There has been a recent change in the management of the home. This has caused some variability with regards to the successful transition for new young people moving into the home.
- This inspection has raised three requirements and one recommendation. The requirements relate to ensuring that all young people access appropriate education; that staff receive the supervision required to enable them to reflect on their practice; that staff are consistent in their approach to behaviour management with all young people in the home; and that staff receive more input with regards to specific complex issues, such as the process of court proceedings.

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that must be taken so that the registered persons meets the Care Standards Act 2000, Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the 'Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards'. The registered persons must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
8: The education standard In order to meet the education standard, the registered person must ensure that staff (2)(a)(x) help each child to attend education or training in accordance with the expectations in the child's relevant plans.	22 July 2016
11: The positive relationships standard In order to meet the positive relationships standard, the registered person must ensure that staff (2)(a)(v) communicate to each child expectations about the child's behaviour and ensure that the child understands those expectations in accordance with the child's age and understanding (x) are provided with supervision and support to enable them to understand and manage their own feelings and responses to the behaviour and emotions of children, and to help children to do the same.	22 July 2016
13: The leadership and management standard In order to meet the leadership and management standard, the registered person must ensure that staff (2)(c) have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child.	22 July 2016

Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further, the service should take account of the following recommendation:

- Rooms should only be searched if the child has been informed or asked for their permission. Immediate searching may be necessary when there are reasonable grounds for believing that there is a risk to the child's or another person's safety or well-being. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 17, paragraph 3.20)

Full report

Information about this children's home

This is a privately owned children's home that is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to six young people who have emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
19 January 2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness
14 July 2015	Full	Requires improvement
4 March 2015	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
15 December 2014	Full	Adequate

Inspection judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
Some young people excel in their education placements, supported by staff. There is good communication between education providers and staff. Young people are reaching their education targets and have aspirations for their futures. Those young people who attend school have friends, and staff promote inclusion. One young person has been on a school trip to London to see a musical and is planning on going to New York with the school next year. Some young people have 25 hours tuition available to them in the home. However, some young people choose not to access education currently. There is a lack of robust challenge, and staff do not implement consistent strategies to encourage some young people to access their education. Staff provide good-quality individualised care to young people. Young people are actively involved within their behaviour management plans, which are highly individualised. Staff are innovative in thinking of ways to create individualised plans for young people, such as using photographs of young people to express different emotions. Staff have started to complete behaviour cycles with some young people, although not all staff members have embedded this into practice yet. This helps young people to think about what feelings and situations cause recurring behaviours, such as family contacts. Staff are mindful of young people's cultural needs and talk to them about their specific needs. Staff are sensitive to those young people living long distances away from home and understand the impact that this has on their ability to settle into placement. Young people make good progress emotionally. They receive specialised input, such as bereavement work, to help them to overcome past trauma. Staff work with the specialist services to ensure that they support the work that other professionals are completing with young people. Young people make progress in addressing their feelings and emotions. A member of staff said, 'He is able to recognise his feelings more now. He knows he is allowed to say how he feels, and we will support him through that; and keep him safe through those feelings.' Staff promote positive experiences in the home. Young people go on mini-break holidays and days out. They take part in clubs, such as ice-skating. Staff spend time with young people playing board games and watching films. Overall, young people say that they have good relationships with their peers in the home. However, staff do not always robustly challenge some young people's behaviours that have a potential impact on the other young people in the home, such as shouting and swearing. Young people enjoy positive relationships with their staff team. Young people have	

said that they feel sad about the recent changes within the staff team and valued members of staff leaving. However, young people had proper endings with those staff members, and staff have supported them by acknowledging their feelings regarding the changes.

Staff listen to young people. They advocate on behalf of them and encourage them to have advocates or independent visitors. Young people know how to make a complaint and staff support them to do so. They ensure that young people are involved in the complaints process and that, after the complaint has been investigated, young people know the outcome. When appropriate, staff complete mediation work with young people, to resolve complaints.

Independence work is good. Staff encourage independence skills, such as cooking, baking and self-care skills. When possible, staff help young people to have planned transitions to new placements, although this has been dependant on the notice period provided by placing authorities. They ensure that young people have an appropriate ending to their time at the home. Young people who are new to the home are made to feel welcome. A social worker for a newly placed young person said, 'My young person said he loved it there. He said it is the best he slept for a long time. He said the staff are lovely. He feels settled and thinks he will do well here.'

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
Young people are safe because of staff members' understanding about risks and young people's individual needs. Staff effectively implement the safeguarding procedures when young people make allegations. They are clear about their roles and responsibilities in safeguarding young people. Staff work hard to get to know young people and their behaviours. On the whole, they actively challenge young people's risk-taking behaviours and take effective action in order to minimise risks. For example, staff have completed room searches when they have suspected that young people have been smoking in their bedrooms, and spoken to their local policing team and social workers. However, they have not always spoken to young people before they have carried out room searches. Staff talk to young people about the risks attached to their behaviours, such as smoking, substance misuse and aggression, and they link with local resources such as the local police community support officer who has visited the young people to talk about anti-social behaviour. Staff help young people to change their behaviours through regular key-working sessions, incentive plans and appropriate consequences. While some young people	

engage in this well and there is notable progress, others do not, due to their struggling to settle in placement. Staff promote an ethos of openness and talking about feelings and emotions that may trigger risk-taking behaviours. A young person said, 'I like the way they try to talk to you on your own and not in front of people if there's something wrong. A member of staff came to find me as she knew I had had a difficult conversation on the phone. That helped me.'

Incidents in the home are rare. Young people's risk-taking behaviours decrease. They rarely go missing, and when young people do walk away from staff, staff are quick to follow them and implement missing-from-home protocols effectively. Young people's risk assessments do not always provide staff with specific guidance in respect of some young people's individual behaviours. This has meant that boundaries have not always been consistent for some young people in the home.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Requires improvement
The registered manager resigned from her post in April 2016. A new manager started in post last week. She is qualified to national vocational qualification (NVQ) level 5 in leadership and management. Of the eight members of staff, six are qualified to NVQ level 3 and above. There have been recent changes to the staff team with some staff leaving, and managers have employed agency staff in the home. However, these are consistent agency staff whom the young people know and have good relationships with. A robust and committed deputy supports the new manager. She knows the young people and she is committed to making improvements in the care provided to them. The resignation of the registered manager caused some instability in the home, with both staff and young people feeling unsettled regarding future management arrangements in the home. The change of management had an impact on new admissions to the home during this period. It caused variability and inconsistency. Some young people who were admitted during this time have struggled to settle. However, those young people who do settle into the placement make remarkable progress. The manager and deputy know the strengths of the home, such as the committed staff team and the good-quality consultation and involvement of young people in their plans. They are aware of the areas of development in the home. For example, some young people's risk management plans do not provide staff with the level of detail needed to manage their complex behaviours effectively. As a result, boundaries have not been consistent. Some young people are currently involved in complex family situations, which have had an impact on staff members'	

understanding and ability to deliver effective behaviour management strategies. Staff have not had the training that they need to be able to understand the complexities or to be able to implement clear boundaries.

Supervisions have not focused on staff practice on young people's behaviour. They have not provided staff with opportunities to reflect on their understanding of young people's behaviours and the care that they can provide to support young people at particularly difficult times. The manager is aware of the need for strong managerial support and guidance.

Partnership working is good. Managers have advocated for young people to have the services that they need, such as bereavement work. They link with professionals such as the youth offending service, the local police team, child and adolescent mental health services, bereavement counsellors, teachers and placing authorities. This means that staff are able to deliver good-quality and coordinated care to some young people, and thus to deliver the home's statement of purpose. The manager is aware of the need to challenge placing authorities to gain clarification regarding care plans and to ensure that young people receive the services that they need.

What the inspection judgements mean

The experiences and progress of children and young people are at the centre of the inspection. Inspectors will use their professional judgement to determine the weight and significance of their findings in this respect. The judgements included in the report are made against 'Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection'.

An **outstanding** children's home provides highly effective services that contribute to significantly improved outcomes for children and young people who need help and protection and care. Their progress exceeds expectations and is sustained over time.

A **good** children's home provides effective services that help, protect and care for children and young people and have their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

In a children's home that **requires improvement**, there are no widespread or serious failures that create or leave children being harmed or at risk of harm. The welfare of children looked after is safeguarded and promoted. Minimum requirements are in place. However, the children's home is not yet delivering good protection, help and care for children and young people.

A children's home that is **inadequate** is providing services where there are widespread or serious failures that create or leave children and young people being harmed or at risk of harm or that result in children looked after not having their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people living in the children's home. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the difference that adults make to the lives of children and young people. They read case files, watched how professional staff work with children, young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care given to children and young people. Wherever possible, they talked to children, young people and their families. In addition, the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service and to consider how well it complies with the Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the 'Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards'.

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